

CHRONICLE

San Francisco, California
September 21, 1962

TERRENCE O'FLAHERTY



"CBS REPORTS" opened its new season with a documentary on a touchy subject — lung cancer and cigarettes — titled "The Teen-Age Smoker."

"Almost a half a million dollars a day is spent by the tobacco industry to show the glamor and the enjoyment of smoking but almost nothing is spent on information about the link between cigarettes and lung cancer," stated narrator Harry Reasoner.

Commented a teenager: "The ads are constantly appealing to our hero worship by showing sports stars smoking." (This has been abolished in Denmark.)

Oregon's Senator Maurine Neuberger: "The tobacco industry is the biggest buyer of ads in school papers."

Reasoner: "Twenty-eight studies in eight countries have been made and all have shown a strong link between cigarettes and lung cancer. . . . Heart disease is also higher in smokers than nonsmokers."

CONSIDERABLE ATTENTION was given to Britain's all-out Government campaign against smoking following a report by the Royal College of Physicians which said the link between lung cancer and cigarettes is "unquestionable." By agreement, the British tobacco industry no longer directs its commercials toward young people.

On-the-show rebuttal by the tobacco interests was limited and unconvincing—so much so that George V. Allen of the Tobacco Institute sent a telegram calling the show "a vehicle for venting of extreme opinions and prejudices."

Commented a lawbreaker: "It's an economic matter. No one ever dared to kill an industry that is one of the bases of our economy."

One thing is certain: Without recruiting young smokers there'll be no money for the tobacco industry to advertise and without cigarette advertising, there would be far less television.

STAR

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TV-RADIO CHATTER

TV Youngster Yields to Series

By FORREST POWERS
Minneapolis Star Staff Writer

THE KID had his heart set on watching "The Virginian" Wednesday evening and, in a desperation move, even offered to settle for "Wagon Train." But we watched the "CBS Reports" offering, "The Teenage Smoker," instead.

The kid is a 15-year-old with an admitted record of trying a few sneak puffs on the weed ("The last time was a menthol. I just wanted to see how it tasted.")

The program we watched contributed nothing new to

the controversy over the effect of smoking on health, but the teen-age boy in my living room watched the report intently. He heard comments from cancer experts, tobacco industry spokesmen and from other teenagers ("I may lose 10 years by smoking, but what the heck! If you're going to enjoy it, why not?")

During the show, I smoked five cigarettes, having worked real hard to develop the habit at age 17. My teenage friend smoked none.

Asked what conclusions he had reached after listening to the program, he replied:

"Kids shouldn't smoke because they're likely to get sick when they're old (age 35 was mentioned on the show). If you smoke too much, the cells start breaking down and the walls of the lungs deteriorate. Smoking does something to the blood vessels so the blood can't get through. That puts a strain on the heart."

Did the program change his thinking about smoking?

"Well, I had more or less decided not to start before I saw the show. Now I'm sure I won't."

Whatever the boy's long-range decision may be, I feel "CBS Reports" deserves a bravo for airing the program, especially so because the TV woods are full of cigarette sponsors.